

Commonwealth of Massachusetts



Emergency Assistance Program (EA)

Fiscal Year 2013, Second Quarterly Report

Department of Housing and Community Development

March 22, 2013



Department of Housing and Community Development
EA Legislative Report
Quarter 2, FY 2013

During the second quarter of FY13, 2,401 families applied for EA during, 18 percent fewer applicants than the previous quarter. Forty-three percent more families applied in FY12 Quarter 2, when HomeBASE rental assistance was available for EA eligible families, which provided an incentive for families to apply for EA.¹

Of the families determined EA eligible 975 (89%) entered shelter or motels, while 122 (11%) were diverted from shelter with HomeBASE household assistance. Shelter/motel entries were 23 percent below the previous quarter and 21 percent below FY12 Quarter 2. A much larger number of families were diverted from shelter with HomeBASE in the previous year. During FY12, Quarter 2, 1,034 families took HomeBASE at the “front door” instead of entering shelter. This was largely due to availability of HomeBASE rental assistance through October 2012.

EA regional eligibility offices referred 520 families to the Department of Children & Families (DCF) for Health and Safety (HAS) assessments. 423 (81%) of these families were determined at risk, while another 97 (19%) were diverted from shelter.

The Boston regional office processed the largest number of EA applications and served as the entry point for 256 families or 26 percent all family entering EA shelter or motels during the quarter. The next largest group of entries came through the Springfield office, although this group was half the size of that entering through Boston, 124 families or 13 percent of total entries. The Brockton office administered almost as many entries, 119 families (12%).

Most of the families entering shelter/motels during the second quarter (61%) presented a health and safety risk that qualified them for EA, compared to the previous quarter when health and safety was the reason for homelessness for only 24 percent of entries. This increase reflects FY13 eligibility changes that eliminated “asked to leave” and “overcrowding” as reasons for homelessness but allowed families to access EA if they were able to demonstrate a substantial health and safety risk through a revised HAS assessment process. Of the families who had a health and safety risk, most (59%) had experienced irregular housing situations, while another 15 percent were living in places that were not meant for human habitation. Fifteen percent were living in situations in which their hosts’ behavior posed a risk (violent conduct, mental illness, or substance abuse), and the remaining 11 percent were living in units with conditions that posed health and safety risks.

During Quarter 2, the average daily number of families in motels was 1,770 (47% of the total EA caseload). This was 2.7 percent increase over the previous quarter’s motel caseload and a 1.3 percent increase in total EA caseload. By the end of the Quarter, however, the caseload was starting to decrease with a 2.3 percent drop in the average daily motel population from 1,787 families in November to 1,747 families in December.

¹ HomeBASE rental assistance was available for EA eligible families at the “front door” from August 2011 through October 2011.

In Quarter 2, 1,057 families exited the EA system. During this period, DHCD began issuing a limited number housing subsidies through the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP). These subsidies were offered to families who had entered EA before July 1, 2012 and who had a member with a disabling condition, making them particularly challenging to rehouse. 144 (14%) of the families leaving EA, exited with an MRVP voucher. In addition, a total of 449 families (42%) exited with HomeBASE household assistance, including 77 (7% of total exits) who also received an MRVP voucher.

EA Applications and Entries

All Applications	SFY 2013 Quarter 2	Previous Quarter	SFY 2013			SFY 2013 Year to Date
			Oct	Nov	Dec	
Families Applying to EA	2,401	2,926	903	800	698	5,327
Families Entering EA Shelter or HomeBASE	1,097	1,507	384	387	326	2,604
Families Entering EA Shelter	975	1,263	333	348	294	2,238
% of EA Eligible Entering Shelter	89%	84%	87%	90%	90%	86%
Families Entering HomeBASE	122	244	51	39	32	366
% of Eligible Entering HB	11%	16%	13%	10%	10%	14%

Sources: DHCD Placement Unit Daily Entry Data and Tracker.

EA Health & Safety Assessments

	SYF 2013 Quarter 2	Previous Quarter	SFY 2013			SFY2013 Year to Date
			Oct	Nov	Dec	
H&S Assessment Referrals to DCF	520	785	166	189	165	1,305
Families Determined at Risk	423	576	131	156	136	999
% Referrals at Risk	81%	73%	79%	83%	82%	77%
Shelter Diversions	97	209	35	33	29	306
% Referrals Diverted	19%	27%	21%	17%	18%	23%

Source: DCF Monthly Homeless H&S Assessment Reports.

EA Shelter Entries by Region Quarter 2, SFY13

Regional Office	SFY 2013 Quarter 2		Previous Quarter	SFY 2013			Year to Date	
	# Families	% of Total		Oct	Nov	Dec	# Families	% of Total
All Offices	975	100%	1,263	333	348	294	2,238	100%
Boston	256	26%	279	96	98	62	535	24%
Brockton	119	12%	150	38	44	37	269	12%
Fall River	10	1%	23	4	4	2	33	1%
Fitchburg	12	1%	8	3	2	7	20	1%
Framingham	24	2%	35	6	14	4	59	3%
Greenfield	9	1%	11	5	2	2	20	1%
Holyoke	44	5%	77	13	17	14	121	5%
Hyannis	17	2%	16	7	3	7	33	1%
Lawrence	60	6%	81	24	17	19	141	6%
Lowell	30	3%	91	7	13	10	121	5%
Malden	69	7%	56	27	27	15	125	6%
New Bedford	20	2%	28	7	6	7	48	2%
North Shore (Salem)	44	5%	95	21	12	11	139	6%
Pittsfield/North Adams	1	<1%	2	0	1	0	3	<1%
Plymouth	6	1%	9	3	2	1	15	1%
Revere	79	8%	83	26	25	28	162	7%
Southbridge	2	<1%	4	2	0	0	6	<1%
Springfield	124	13%	145	29	44	51	269	12%
Taunton	11	1%	13	5	3	3	24	1%
Worcester	38	4%	57	10	14	14	95	4%

Source: DHCD Placement Unit Daily Entry Data.

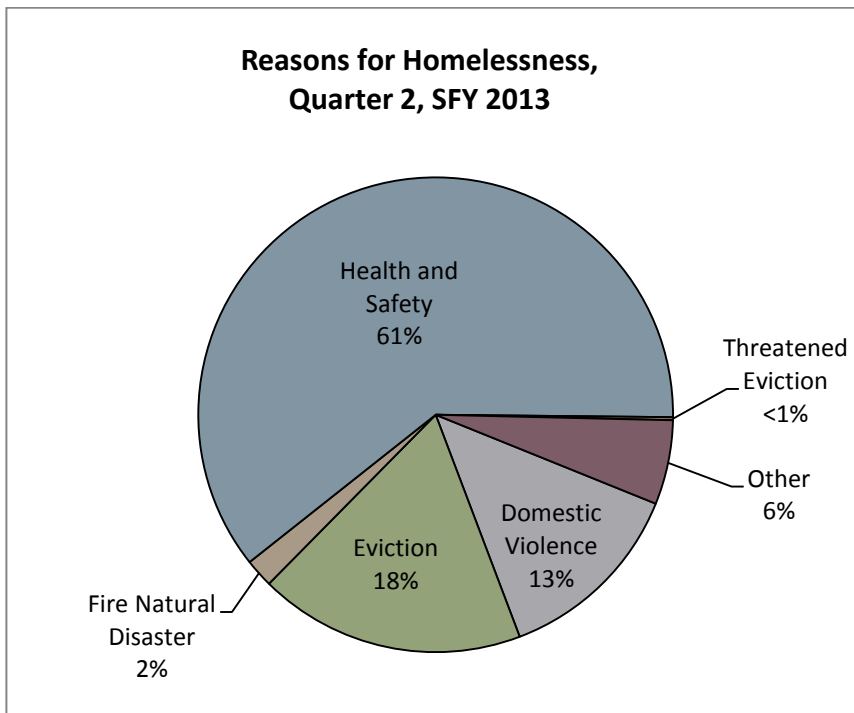
Reason for Homelessness, Families Entering Shelter/Motels

Reason for Homelessness	SFY 2013 Quarter 2		Previous Quarter	SFY 2013			SFY 2013 YTD	
	# Families	% of Total		Oct	Nov	Dec	# Families	% of Total
Total	975	100%	1,263	333	348	294	2,238	100%
Domestic Violence	128	13%	161	50	38	40	289	13%
Eviction	177	18%	317	68	60	49	494	22%
Fire Natural Disaster	19	2%	13	5	8	6	32	1%
Health and Safety	593	61%	307	196	218	179	900	40%
Asked to Leave	N/A	N/A	231	N/A	N/A	N/A	231	10%
Overcrowding	N/A	N/A	184	N/A	N/A	N/A	184	8%
Threatened Eviction - Unauthorized Tenant	2	<1%	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	2	<1%
Other	56	6%	50	14	24	18	106	5%

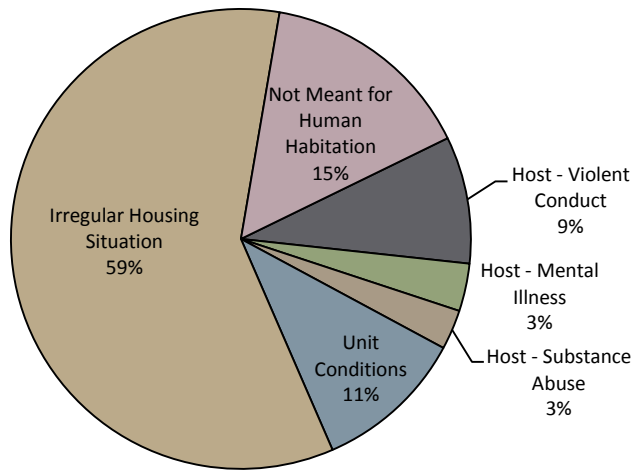
Notes:

EA eligibility changes were implemented in September 2012 that eliminated “asked to leave” and “overcrowded” categories. “Threatened Eviction – Unauthorized Tenant” was added as an eligibility category in December 2012.

Source: DHCD Placement Unit data.



**Health & Safety Reasons,
Quarter 2, SFY 2013**



Shelter Exits

	SFY 2013 Quarter 2		Previous Quarter	SFY 2013			Year to Date	
	# Families	% of Total		Oct	Nov	Dec	# Families	% of Total
Total Shelter/Motel Exits	1,057	100%	1,098	333	327	397	2,155	100%
Exiting with HomeBASE Only	372	35%	216	143	121	108	588	27%
Exiting with MRVP Only	67	6%	0	0	16	51	67	3%
Exiting with HomeBASE and MRVP	77	7%	0	0	18	59	77	4%

Shelter Costs

Daily Utilization by Shelter Type	Quarter 2 SFY 2013 Daily Usage	% of Total Daily Usage	Contracted Units	Quarter 2 Average LOS	Average Daily Rate	Quarter 2 Average Cost Per Family
Shelter (Congregate and Scattered)	2,023	53%	2,023	276	\$117	\$32,292
Motel	1,770	47%	.	189	\$80	\$15,120
All Families	3,793	100%	2,023			
Difference from Previous Quarter	47					
% Change from Previous Quarter	1.3%					

Notes:

Shelter utilization is the daily number of contracted units.

Motel usage data indicate the average daily number of EA families staying in motels during the quarter.

Average length of stay was calculated using length of stay for families who exited shelter during the quarter and families who were still in shelters at the end of the quarter.

Sources: DHCD Management Report, DCHD Daily Entry Data, and BEACON Data Warehouse.

Shelter Diversion Costs and Savings

	Quarter 2 Families Diverted with HomeBASE Household Assistance	Diversion Cost Per Family	Quarter 2 Total Diversion Cost	Average Shelter Cost Per Family	Quarter 2 Savings
Shelter Diversions	122	\$4,000	\$488,000	\$22,557	\$2,751,893

Notes:

Diversion costs assume that all families receiving Household Assistance use the maximum \$4,000 benefit.

Average shelter costs are based on an EA average length of stay of 229 days at a daily rate of \$98.5 per day.

Housing Status of Families Receiving HomeBASE Rental Assistance

HomeBASE Rental Assistance Housing Status	# of Families	% of HB Families
Total Families Receiving HB Rental Assistance in FY12	7,201	100%
Families Still Receiving Rental Assistance	6,332	88%
Families No Longer Receiving Rental Assistance	869	12%
Moved Out of State	240	3%
Violated Program/Lease Requirement or Fraud	274	4%
Left the Program	41	< 1%
Moved to Subsidized Housing	56	1%
Is No Longer Eligible	34	< 1%
Chose Not to Recertify	30	< 1%
Evicted	26	< 1%
Other	168	2%

Note: Data indicates families still receiving HomeBASE rental assistance through December 31, 2012.

Source: DHCD, TRACKER database.